

## Ask the U.S. Embassy

October 1, 2014

### Transmitting Citizenship to Children of U.S. Citizens

**Q:** *I have a father who is a citizen in the USA. What are the possibilities for my siblings and me to become American citizens? I am 27 and my siblings are 34 and 35.*

We're pleased to hear you are considering your options for U.S. citizenship!

You don't mention when your father became a U.S. citizen, but if he was a citizen at the time of your and your siblings' births, he may be able to transmit citizenship to you. You can make an appointment with the Embassy to determine whether you meet the transmission requirements – find out more at [http://kingston.usembassy.gov/report\\_birth\\_abroad.html](http://kingston.usembassy.gov/report_birth_abroad.html).

If he became a U.S. citizen after you were born, through immigration and naturalization, the first step in this process would be to get in touch with your father to determine if he would be willing to file a petition for you or your siblings to immigrate to the United States. The process requires his active participation – he will need to agree to support you, demonstrate financial capacity and provide other essential information.

Your age and marital status will determine the type of petition your father files. Three types of visa classes are available for children of U.S. citizens – unmarried children under 21 (IR-2), unmarried sons and daughters 21 or over (F11) or married sons and daughters of any age (F31). As you are all over 21, you would fall into the latter two visa classes depending on your marital status. In these categories, your children and spouses may be included on the petition and immigrate with you.

For each petition, your father will need to fill out a Form I-130. (This form is managed by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), an office within the Department of Homeland Security. Their website, [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov), contains very helpful and detailed information.) Along with the I-130 form for each of you, he must also submit evidence of his U.S. citizenship, a copy of your birth certificate, proof of any legal names changes that may have taken place, and proof of relationship. A father-child relationship can be established three ways – through marriage between the biological parents before the child turned 18; legitimation under the law of the father's or child's residence; or evidence of emotional and/or financial involvement in the child's life prior to the child turning 21 or marrying.

Evidence to prove a relationship can take many forms, and it's a good idea to submit ample evidence for consideration. It can include a marriage certificate between the parents, photos of the parent and child together over time, financial support information, insurance documents, school or church records, phone records, letters/email/cards/chat logs or proof of visits. If convincing evidence of this sort cannot be presented, DNA testing can also be done to establish a relationship.

Once your father has completed the Form I-130 and collected the required supporting documents, he will submit the petition to USCIS for eligibility review. The address is identified on

their website. Once USCIS determines eligibility, they will send it on to the National Visa Center (NVC) for further review, and approved cases will be sent to U.S. Embassy Kingston. You will be called for an interview and submit additional supporting documents – your original birth certificate, police certificate, medical exam and other requested items – at that time. If the petition is approved, you will be able to travel to the U.S., attain Legal Permanent Resident (LPR) status, and eventually naturalize as an American citizen.

Find out how to get the process started at <http://www.uscis.gov/family/family-us-citizens/children/bringing-children-sons-and-daughters-live-united-states-permanent-residents>.

*You can find more information about how to travel to the U.S. on our website, [www.kingston.usembassy.gov](http://www.kingston.usembassy.gov). Keep on top of Embassy news on our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Embassy-Jamaica> and by following @USEmbassyJA on Twitter. We also answer general visa questions on our Facebook and Twitter pages.*